1-12. (CANCELED)

13. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A method for controlling an actuator of a starting clutch of an automatic transmission of a motor vehicle independently of a vehicle operator to cause a "back-and-forth" rocking motion of the vehicle to free the vehicle from a roadway obstruction, comprising the steps of:

sensing

a driving speed of the vehicle below a predetermined limit,

at least one of

a slippage of at least one vehicle wheel exceeding a predetermined slippage threshold, and

a drive moment of a force acting against a vehicle wheel exceeding a predetermined drive moment threshold, and

a positioning of the operator controlled gas pedal exceeding a kick-down deflection angle, and

periodically activating the actuator to engage and disengage the starting clutch at an activation frequency F1 selected to cause the "back-and-forth" rocking motion

~~the control apparatus can regulate the clutch actuator, for example, by an activation frequency F1, because of input vehicle and roadway specifics, as mentioned in the introductory comments, as well as by the surrounding circumstances as determined by appropriate sensors in which the actuator is so regulated by a control apparatus that a starting clutch engages, at an indication of a desire to start as well as engages by an adjustment activated by a given transmission ratio, and disengages at termination of a starting operation, the starting clutch is operated during a starting procedure by control of the actuator in such a way that a torque (M_K) transmitted therefrom periodically varies~~.

14. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The method according to claim 13, ~~further comprising the step conforming a periodicity of the actuator with~~ wherein the activation frequency F1 is determined by characteristics of the vehicle and ~~with those~~ of ~~an actual~~ the roadway obstruction so that the vehicle is able to overcome the roadway obstruction ~~in a fully automatic manner~~.

15. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The method according to claim 13, ~~further comprising the step of taking into consideration, for a determination of a periodic actuation of the actuator, at least one of the following~~wherein:

the activation frequency F1 is determined by at least one of

a vehicle speed,

a weight of the vehicle,

a radius of vehicle wheels,

ground contact of the vehicle wheels, and

forces influenced by a roadway obstruction and arising from a rocking process of the vehicle[[,]]and acting ~~which forces act~~ against progress of the vehicle in a current driving direction.

16. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The method according to claim 13, further comprising the step of maintaining a constant transmission ratio during periodic operation of the actuator.

17. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The method according to claim 13, further comprising the step of continuing periodic activation of the actuator to engage and disengage the starting clutch at an activation frequency F1 selected to cause the "back-and-forth" rocking motion only if ~~the control apparatus previous confirms that~~ (1) a driving speed is very small or is zero and (2) a slip of at least one of the vehicle driving wheels oversteps [[a]] the predetermined slippage threshold [[value]].

18. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The method according to claim 13, further comprising the step of ~~carrying out a periodic operation~~ continuing periodic activation of the actuator to engage and disengage the starting clutch at an activation frequency F1 selected to cause the "back-and-forth" rocking motion only if (1) [[a]]] the driving speed is ~~very small or is zero~~ below the predetermined limit and (2) ~~a prior determination is registered from the control apparatus that forces working against a drive moment (M_Z) of vehicle wheels exceed a predetermined threshold value~~ the drive moment of a force acting against the vehicle wheel exceeds the predetermined drive moment threshold.

19. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The method according to claim 13, further comprising the step of:

initiating periodic activation of the actuator to engage and disengage the starting clutch at an activation frequency F1 selected to cause the "back-and-forth" rocking motion ~~carrying out a periodic operation only if the control apparatus has~~ receiving [[a]] an operator generated previous confirmation ~~that an actuation element~~ for activation of the periodic ~~operation is operated by a vehicle occupant~~ activation the actuator to engage and disengage the starting clutch to cause the "back-and-forth" rocking motion.

20. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The method according to claim 13, further comprising the step of selecting [[an]] the activation frequency, for a periodic operation of the actuator, by adjustment of an actuation element.

21. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The method according to claim 13, ~~further comprising the step of calculating an actuation frequency by analysis of at least one of~~ wherein:

the activation frequency F1 is determined by at least one of

a vehicle speed,

a controlled direction,

a controlled distance, and

a speed of control of an activation element.

22. (CANCELED)

23. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The method according to claim 13, further comprising the step of discontinuing periodic operation ~~only if a gas pedal for power control of a motor of the motor vehicle is engaged at a predetermined set angle~~ when the positioning of the operator controlled gas pedal is less than the kick-down deflection angle.

24-25. (CANCELED)

26. (NEW) A method for controlling an actuator of a starting clutch of an automatic transmission of a motor vehicle, the method comprising the steps of:

providing a control unit for controlling the actuator in the following manner:

closing the starting clutch when a starting operation request is received at a predetermined transmission ratio;

opening the starting clutch to end the starting operation;

controlling the actuator during the starting operation in such a way to periodically fluctuate a transmitted torque (M_K); and

tuning the periodic fluctuation of the transmitted clutch actuator to the characteristics of the motor vehicle and an obstacle in the drive path of the motor vehicle; and

automatically overcoming the obstacle in the drive path while maintaining the predetermined transmission ratio unchanged during the periodic fluctuation operation of the actuator or the starting clutch.

27. (NEW) The method according to claim 26 further comprising the step of evaluating at least one of the vehicle speed, the vehicle mass, the radius of the vehicle wheels, the grip of the vehicle tires and/or the built-up forces, which act on the vehicle in overcoming the obstacle in the drive path for determination of the periodic actuation of the clutch actuator, .

28. (NEW) The method according to claim 26 further comprising the step of performing periodic fluctuation when the control unit detects that the driving speed is very slow or zero and a predetermined threshold value of slip is exceeded on at least one of the powered wheels of the vehicle.

29. (NEW) The method according to claim 26 further comprising the step of performing periodic fluctuation when the driving speed is very slow or zero and the control unit detects that the forces counteracting the driving torque (M_Z) exceeded a predetermined threshold value.

30. (NEW) The method according to claim 26 further comprising the step of performing periodic fluctuation when the control unit detects that a control element for actuation of the periodic fluctuation was actuated by a vehicle occupant.

31. (NEW) The method according to claim 26 further comprising the step of selecting the frequency of actuation of periodic fluctuation of the actuator or the clutch according to a setting on the control unit.

32. (NEW) The method according to claim 26 further comprising the step of determining through analysis of the vehicle speed, the control direction, the control travel, and/or the control speed of the control element.

33. (NEW) The method according to claim 26 further comprising the step of using the gas pedal of the automotive engine as the control unit.

34. (NEW) The method according to claim 26 further comprising the step of triggering periodic fluctuation when a gas pedal for power control of an automotive engine is actuated beyond a predetermined operating angle (kickdown position).